

ONE HUNDRED THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION - 2014
COMMITTEE STATEMENT
LB1098

Hearing Date: Wednesday February 26, 2014
Committee On: Natural Resources
Introducer: Carlson
One Liner: Change membership and powers and duties of the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:
Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

Vote Results:

Aye: 8 Senators Brasch, Carlson, Dubas, Haar, Johnson, Kolowski, Schilz, Smith

Nay:

Absent:

Present Not Voting:

Proponents:

Senator Tom Carlson
Clint Johannes

David Kadlecek

Scott Smathers
Bruce Kennedy
Jay Rempe

Marian Langan
Tom Knutson
Ron Wolf
Rick Kubat
Tim McCoy
Loran Schmit
Brian Barels

Representing:

Introducer
Water Funding Task Force; Natural Resources Commission
Nebraska Association of Resources Districts; Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District; Natural Resources Commission
Nebraska Sportsmen's Foundation
Nebraska Wildlife Federation
Nebraska Farm Bureau; Nebraska Cattlemen; Nebraska Corn Growers Association; Nebraska Pork Producers Association; Nebraska Sorghum Producers Association; Nebraska Soybean Association
Audubon Nebraska
Water Funding Task Force
Nebraska Water Coalition
Metropolitan Utilities District
Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Association of Nebraska Ethanol Producers
Nebraska Public Power District

Opponents:

Representing:

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

LB 1098 would changing the voting membership of the Natural Resources Commission from 16 to 27 and provide duties for administration and distribution of the state's newly created Water Sustainability Fund.

Explanation of amendments:

The committee amendment replaces the original bill and would:

- * Add members to the Natural Resources Commission, one representing each of the following interests: agribusiness, agriculture, ground water irrigators, irrigation districts, manufacturing, metropolitan utilities districts, municipal water users from a primary class city, municipal water users from a first or second class city or village, outdoor recreation users, public power districts, public power and irrigation districts, range livestock owners, surface water irrigators, and wildlife conservation.
- * Require the Governor to: appoint members with knowledge of and experience with water use and economy; give recognition to both water quantity and quality and; appoint members from diverse geographical regions of the state.
- * Require the commission to establish goals and a ranking system for projects applying for funding from the Water Sustainability Fund, consistent with water sustainability goals.
- * Provide intent that the Water Sustainability Fund be used to "protect the ability of future generations to meet their needs through increasing aquifer recharge, reducing aquifer depletions, increasing streamflow, remediating threats to drinking water" and for water management goals.
- * Provide that the Water Sustainability Fund be used to contribute to multiple water supply management goals, provide funds to municipalities for sewer infrastructure projects, provide increased water productivity and enhanced water quality, and comply with interstate compacts or other agreements. The most cost effective solutions are to be used.
- * State the Legislature's finding that the goals of the fund can be met by considering projects in four categories: (1) research, data, and modeling; (2) rehabilitation or restoration of water supply infrastructure, new infrastructure, infrastructure maintenance, and protection of infrastructure from flooding; (3) conjunctive management, storage, and integrated management of all water; and (4) compact or agreement compliance.
- * Require that funds be equitably distributed statewide for the long term, but allowing no more than ten percent of annual funding to go towards sewer infrastructure projects.
- * Provide criteria for ranking and scoring projects applying for funding.
- * Require the commission to collaborate with the Department of Natural Resources, the University of Nebraska, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Nebraska Environmental Trust, and the Game and Parks Commission.
- * Require a report to the Legislature.
- * Add an emergency clause.

Tom Carlson, Chairperson